Corkagh Park — Páirc Chorcaí

South Dublin County Council Elected Members

Clondalkin

Curran, John, Leas Cathaoirleach (FF), 15 Knockmeenagh Rd., Clondalkin, D. 22
Dowds, Robert, (LAB), 43 Castle Park, Clondalkin, D. 22
McGrath, Colm, (IND), 'Tower House', 48 Tower Rd., Clondalkin, D. 22
Ridge, Thérèse, (FG), 4 St. Patrick's Avenue, Clondalkin, D. 22
Tyndall, Colm, (PD), 15 St. Brigid's Drive, Clondalkin, D. 22

Lucan

Doherty-Ryan, Deirdre, (FF), 32 Kennelsfort Rd., Palmerstown, D. 20
Gogarty, Paul, (GR), 34 Cherbury Park Rd., Lucan, Co. Dublin
Keating, Derek, (IND), P.C. 66 Beech Park, Lucan, Co. Dublin
Tuffy, Joanna, (LAB), 111 Esker Lawns, Lucan Co. Dublin

Tallaght Central

Daly, Mark, (SF), 31 Cill Cais, Old Bawn, Tallaght, D. 24
Hayes, Brian, (FG), 48 Dunmore Park, Kingswood Heights, D. 24
Maloney, Eamonn, (LAB), 84 St. Maelruans Park, Tallaght, D. 24.
O Connor, Charlie, (FF), C/O South Dublin County Council, Tallaght, D. 24
Tipping, Don, (LAB), "Belpark" Elmcastle Drive, Kilnamanagh, D. 24

Tallaght South

Billane, Mick, (LAB), 6 Ellensborough Dale, Kiltipper, Tallaght, D. 24

Crowe, Seán, (SF), 16 Raheen Green, Tallaght, D. 24

Daly, Jim, (FF), 59 Coolamber Drive, Rathcoole, Co. Dublin

Hannon, John, (FF), 11 Knocklyon Heights, Firhouse Rd., D. 16

Rabbitte, Pat, (LAB), 56, Monastery Drive, D. 22

Terenure/Rathfarnham

Ardagh, Máire, (FF), 168 Walkinstown Road, D. 12

Keane Cáit, Cathaoirleach (PD), 26 Rushbrook Court, Templeogue, Dublin 6W

Lahart, John, (FF), 6 Orlagh Grange, Scholarstown Rd., Rathfarnham, D. 16

Laing, Stanley, (FG), 86 Templeville Road, Terenure, Dublin 6W

Ormonde, Ann, (FF), C/O Seanad Eireann, D. 2

Walsh, Eamonn, (LAB), 133 Limekiln Green, Walkinstown, D. 12

Donnelly, Ann, (IND), 57 Whitecliff, Rathfarnham, D. 16

Corkagh Park — Páirc Chorcaí

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Acknowledgements

CORKAGH Park in Clondalkin is one of the premier parks in the South Dublin County Council administrative area. The public have continuously expressed their support for its environmental, amenity and recreational uses and a great number are also interested in its history. As with all of our parks, there is a need to provide information on all of these matters and to enable people to understand various practices taking place as the management task changes from season to season and from year to year. This booklet is part of a series of publications prepared on the parks of South Dublin, designed to inform and to enable a more fulfilling experience for people who use the parks and to encourage others to visit and avail of the facilities.

David Cotter and Jennifer Wann undertook the task of researching the history of the former Corkagh Demesne and the various people who lived and worked there. They conducted interviews with people who had associations with Corkagh and examined historical documentation as well as files in the County Council offices.

South Dublin County Council would particularly like to thank and acknowledge the kind assistance of members of the Colley and Hone families with this publication.

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Entrance sign at Corkagh Park.

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Georgina Byrne, Senior Librarian, and Kieran Swords, Librarian, County Library; Kevin Kane, Senior Community Officer, Community Services Department; the staffs of the Library Services and the Environmental Services of South Dublin County Council.

Corkagh Park is a tribute to the vision of the elected members and management of Dublin County Council in which Dan O'Sullivan, former County Manager played a key role. When the lands were acquired in 1983, the then Senior Parks Superintendent, Michael Lynch developed the park with the assistance of Jim Connell, District Supervisor. Since 1994, the park has been in the care of South Dublin County Council, Parks & Landscape Services Department, under the guidance of Michael Hannon and Leslie Moore, Senior Executive Parks Superintendents; Matt Rudden, District Supervisor and Ray Greally, Foreman, who has been on site since 1983. A major factor in the success of Corkagh Park is the excellent and enthusiastic workforce including Crafts, Park Rangers, Tractor Operators and a number of other grades who daily manage the park and the Clondalkin area.

Finally, appreciation is extended to the Heritage Council for their generous support.

Councillor Cáit Keane
Cathaoirleach

Frank Kavanagh
County Manager

Dr. Christy Boylan
Senior Parks Superintendent

South Dublin County Council, December 2001

Aerial view of Corkagh Park and adjacent residential community of Clondalkin.

Introduction

Close-up of Children's playgound.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Aerial view of Corkagh Park showing the children's playground and the Dublin mountains in the background.

ONE of the most important treasures of South Dublin is the 120 hectare (300 acre) Corkagh Park immediately adjacent to the Naas Road and stretching almost a mile to the village of Clondalkin. Although opened to the public since 15th June 1986, it is not as well known as some of the other regional parks in the Dublin area. It incorporates lands of the former Corkagh Demesne, which were purchased in 1983 by Dublin County Council.

The Finlay and Colley families owned the property from the 18th century until 1959. The house they occupied has gone, but they left behind a rich heritage of mature specimen trees and woodlands, natural water features and gently undulating parkland.

The landscape of the park is typical of estate parkland in appearance, with large open expanses of grassland. Panoramic views through the Park's flat to gently undulating topography lead the eye to the foothills of the Dublin and Wicklow Mountains. These views are framed by the numerous groups of mature trees. The underlying rock of the park is Carboniferous Limestone and the soil profile varies in depth from 1m to 3m.

The landscape is also a part of the flood plain of the River Camac, which flows through the park in an easterly direction on its way to the Liffey. It fed a number of mills in the area which are now in ruins. The adjacent lands contain the ruins of mills which were used for making gunpowder, oil, and various other products, and it is intended to redevelop these as well as the walled garden and former courtyards of the demesne as an enterprise and heritage centre.

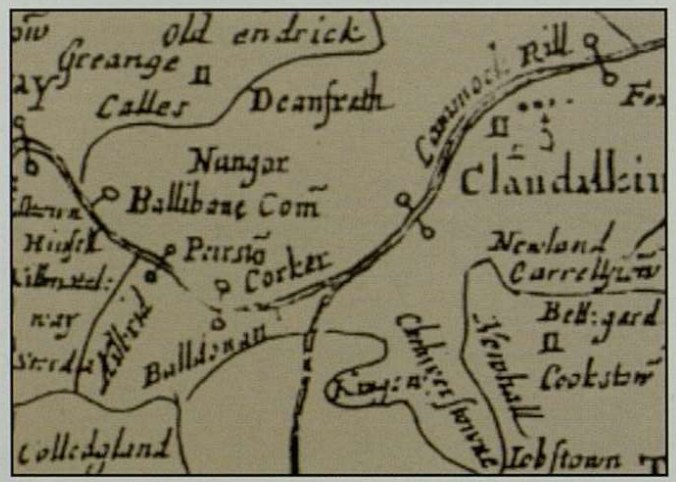
The Ruins of Fairview Oil and Corn Mills

Section One - Past & Present

Historical Overview of the Lands at Corkagh

Corkagh Park and its Placenames

Map extract showing Corker (Corkagh) from *Hiberniae Delineatio* by Sir William Petty, 1685.
(Courtesy of the Map Library, Trinity College, Dublin)



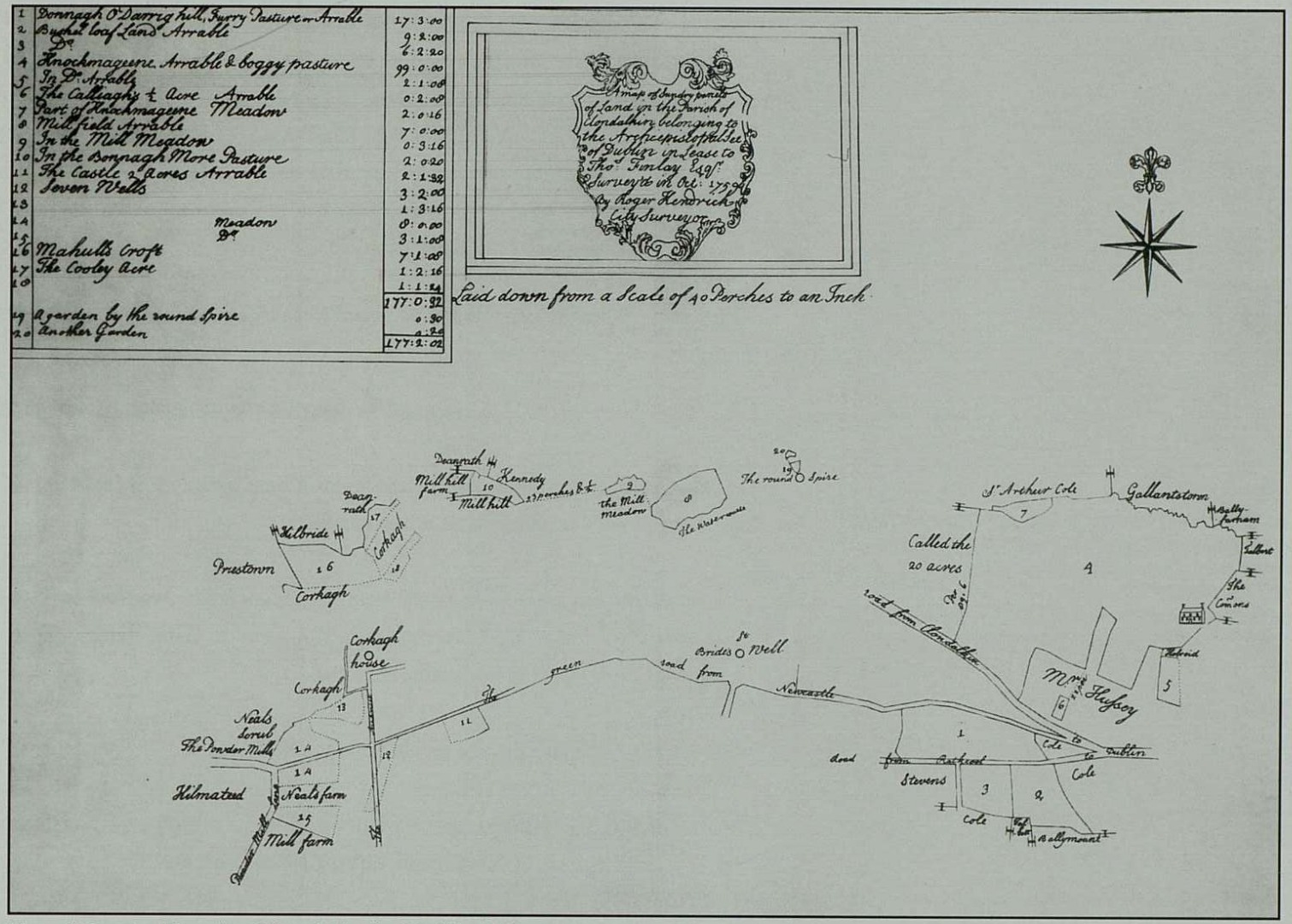
CORKAGH Park presently incorporates some or all of four townlands. The majority of the Park is composed of the townland of *Corkagh Demesne*. It also includes part of the townlands of *Corkagh*, *Gibraltar* and *Fairview*. It lies within the Parish of Clondalkin and the Barony of Uppercross in South Dublin County.

The name Corkagh is possibly derived from the old Irish name *Corcach*, meaning *marsh*. This is in keeping with the fact that the River Camac flows through the middle of the present day park and former estate lands. These low-lying lands would have formed part of the flood plain of the river.

Further examination of other placenames in the immediate vicinity also helps to indicate former geographical or topographical features of the area. *Corraghan*, which lies to the south of the former Corkagh House site, derives its name from *Corrachan* meaning *little bog or marsh*. To the north lies *Scarlow*, which may be derived from *Sciorlach* or *Screallach* meaning *barren land*.

Outside the eastern boundary of Corkagh Demesne lies *Cappahdevoge* or *Cappadogue*, a local name for a small triangular holding of land. This name and its variant seem to be long forgotten, but it may have been derived from *Ceapach na Díobhoige* meaning *the bog stream tillage plot*.

Historical maps for the area show a stream arising from the site of the Sruleen Well and flowing down towards the site of the former Corkagh House. *Sruleen* or *Srúilín* translates as *the well of the little stream*. The land between the well and Cappahdevoge was most likely marshy due to the topography of the lands.



Map of Sundry Parcels of Lands in the Parish of Clondalkin belonging to the Archiepiscopal See of Dublin, in lease to T. Finlay. Surveyed by R. Kendrick, October 1759. *From a photostat copy in the National Library of Ireland)[16.G.16(59)].*

Corkagh Park and its Placenames

Historical references have hinted at the fact that there may have been once a church located in the vicinity, giving the lands of Corkagh an ecclesiastical association. The former dower house and outbuildings belonging to the Corkagh Estate, now Carbery Nurseries, are located in the townland of Corkagh and in an area known locally as *Kilmatead* or *Little Corkagh*. The name Kilmatead means the *Church of Tadhg*, hence supporting a possible ecclesiastical association. Coincidently the townlands immediately to the west of Corkagh are known as *Priesttown* and *Kilcarbery*. They too may hint at an ecclesiastical association.

Other known local placenames to be found in the immediate vicinity of Corkagh Park, include:

The Commons, a commonly used name to describe open, common pasture land.

Stangnageeroge, located a short distance down from the ruins of Fairview Mill, roughly translated means *the small field of the beetles*.

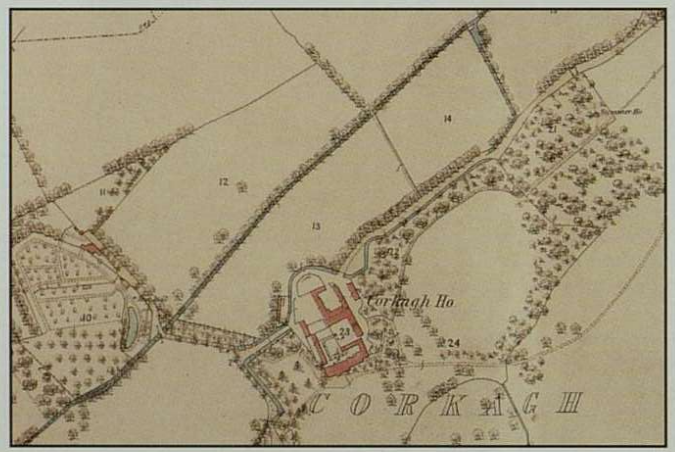
Fairview probably derives its name from a house name. Owners who travelled and completed the *'Grand Tour'* often gave such a name to their houses. Fairview Mill is marked on Duncan's map of Dublin, 1821.

Gibraltar also probably derives its name from a house name.

Other known abbreviations and variations of the Corkagh name include *Corcagh*, *Corcach*, *Corce*, *Corke*, *Corker*, *Corkath*, *Corrk*, *Cork* and *Corcaigh*.

The official Irish form for Corkagh is *Corcach*, for Corkagh Park it is *Páirc Chorcaí*, for Corkagh House it is *Teach Chorcaí* and for Corkagh Demesne it is *Diméin Chorcaí*.

The House and Walled Garden of Corkagh Demense. Map extract from *Ordnance Plan of the Parish of Clondalkin, Baronies of Newcastle and Uppercross in the County of Dublin.* Surveyed by Lieutenant Engledue, R. E., 1870.
(Courtesy Ordnance Survey Ireland - Permit No. MP012701)



Map extract from *Ordnance Plan of the Parish of Clondalkin, Baronies of Newcastle and Uppercross in the County of Dublin*. Surveyed by Lieutenant Engledue, R. E., 1870.

(Courtesy Ordnance Survey Ireland - Permit No. MP012701.)

The Archaeology of Corkagh Park

HISTORICAL evidence has indicated that there may have been a castle in the vicinity of the former Corkagh House. As the house was completely demolished in the early 1960's, no assessable features remain visible above the ground.

The historian Liam Ua Broin, in 1944, describes how Corkagh House '*stood within the moat of a castle, ruins of which consisted of an arched entrance, portion of a battlemented parapet and eight windows*'.

He also further comments that '... *a stream running down from the River Cammock* (Camac) *formed the northern part of the moat, and a diversion of the same stream, re-uniting further down, completed it. The stream still runs in its old channel and for the most part the diversion remains as a dry sunken fence. A mill stood on the stream at the point of diversion where some of its masonry is to be seen*'.

During the construction of the northeastern gas pipeline in 1984, a suspected Neolithic enclosure was unearthed very close to the present day children's playground. When excavated the site revealed a scatter of post-holes. Some stone implements were also discovered, including a flint leaf-shaped point and a chert end scraper.

At the beginning of 2001, with the installation of the Saggart, Rathcoole and Newcastle drainage scheme, the remains of a pit furnace was unearthed in Corkagh Demesne. The pit furnace dates from medieval or earlier times and was used for a short period for smelting metal ore.

At the end of 2001, excavation works associated with the River Camac Improvement Scheme, also unearthed other patterns of habitation within Corkagh Demesne. To date structural evidence in the form of a corn drying kiln, portable finds (glass beads) and other features suggest habitation in the area from at least as early as 12th century. Human remains and a possible enclosing ditch were also uncovered. This may indicate the presence of an ecclesiastical site. Further archaeological investigations may in time help to clarify this.

Archaeologists at work on the skeletal remains found in Corkagh Park, November 2001.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Side angle view of Corkagh House, date unknown.
Courtesy of the Gillman Collection.

Corkagh House, Corkagh Estate and Land Ownership

Corkagh House, showing the seventeenth century building to the right and the eighteenth century one to the left, date unknown.
(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley)

VERY little is known about the Corkagh area prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans to Ireland. One of the earliest references to Corkagh dates back to 1324 when it is mentioned as being part of the lands in Clondalkin belonging to the then Archbishop of Dublin, Alexander de Bicknor. The lands that make up Corkagh were at times part of a vast amount of property owned by the church and often parcels of these lands were leased to various tenants.

The former Corkagh House originally started out as a small farmhouse built circa 1650. According to Liam Ua Broin, a map dating from 1658 indicates two houses with a moat. Neither seemed to be of any great size or possess any castle type features. Corkagh House was extended between 1702 and 1714 when a large wing was added to the existing buildings. The addition had eight bays and a parapeted roof. At a later stage a porch was added to the front entrance of the later wing.

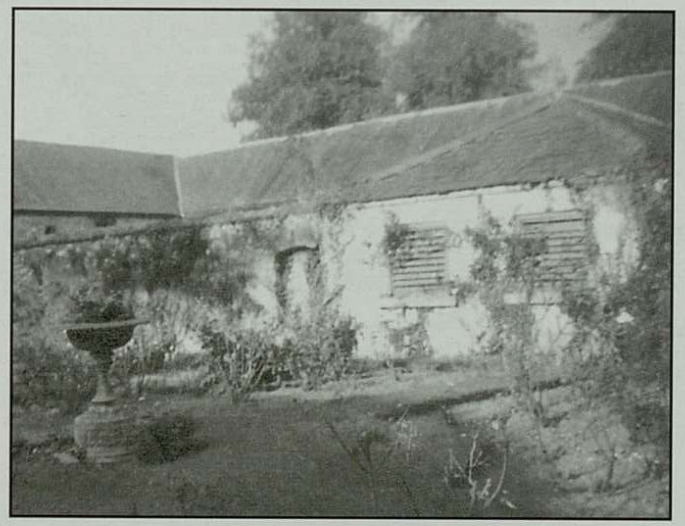
In its heyday, Corkagh House contained ten bedrooms, a library, a dining room, drawing room, study and anteroom. It provided employment for twenty-five house servants. Outside, the management of the demesne lands provided employment for a further twenty-five men.

There was a substantial walled garden, most of which remains, though in an overgrown state. An arched yew walk, a beech hedge rectangle grown to the size of trees and the remnants of a pond are still to be seen. There was a stove house and a number of glass houses, including one for peaches and one for vines. Numerous fruit trees were also grown.

The former farm outbuildings and barns are still to be seen to the rear of where the house once stood. These are impressive cut stone structures with hipped roofs. There was a rose garden and a dairy. There was also a most unusual laundry. It had detailed wrought iron supports for the shelves and elaborate plaster cornicing, which is still visible in what is now the Park Depot office.

Corkagh House, Corkagh Estate and Land Ownership

The former rose garden at the back of Corkagh House, with the farm buildings in the background, date unknown.
(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley)



A tennis court stood at the front of the house and further out across the front lawn was a *'ha-ha'* — a ditch which prevented livestock from trespassing, while providing an uninterrupted view. There was also an ice-house, the remains of which are still to be seen over near the present-day Camac Valley Tourist Caravan and Camping Park. It was constructed of red brick and built into the ground.

Diversions of the River Camac are channelled around the back and the front of the farm buildings, former house site and lawn, giving the impression of a moat encircling this area. Several picturesque stone bridges cross the rear channel.

Near to where the children's playground is located was an unusual building known as the Hexagon or the *'Heck'*. This was built for Colonel Henry Thomas Finlay by his father, Reverend John William Finlay in the nineteenth century and was used as a playhouse and tea-room. As the name implies it was hexagonal in shape, eight feet across, with two windows, a fireplace, a cupboard and a door. The walls were made of brick and stone and it had a thatched roof.

Approximately south-west of the house is an area which was known as the Cedar Lawn. It is bordered by several impressive Cedar trees and was a popular location for taking tea outdoors, croquet and tennis. Off the cedar lawn was a water garden.

There were three primary entrances into the Estate. The main entrance ran from the Naas Road straight in front of the house taking a circuitous route to the side of the house. It was known as the Oak Avenue and still survives in today's park. There was a lodge at the gates. A second entrance ran from what is now St. John's Road and followed the same route as the current path from the car park entrance to the house site. There was also a gate lodge at this entrance. The third entrance, with a lodge, led from the Naas Road down to Kilmatead House.

According to several eighteenth century maps there was a road bisecting the estate, running parallel to the Naas Road. It was labelled on one map as *The Green Road from Newcastle to Dublin* (Duff, 1703) and in Corkagh Estate itself passed the front of Kilmatead House towards St. John's Road.

The Gunpowder and Other Mills

THE gunpowder mills on Corkagh Estate, active during the 18th and 19th centuries, were regarded as a nationally important centre for the production of gunpowder and provided employment for many local people. The reasonably intact remains of four gunpowder mills are to be found in Kilmatead, along with two mill ponds. Some of the other buildings in the Kilmatead complex were possibly also mills as it was estimated that there were about nine powder mills in the area altogether. The remains of another gunpowder mill and mill pond are to be found at the southern edge of the park boundary bordering Kilmatead. Gunpowder milling in the Clondalkin area seems to have been carried on from 1716 until the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815.

In 1733 the production of gunpowder ceased temporarily in Clondalkin as a result of an explosion. This was a relatively common occurrence with the manufacturing of gunpowder. It was a hazardous process which required a site to be sufficiently large and isolated from populated areas. The mill buildings were often situated at a distance from each other to prevent chain reaction type explosions from taking place. Furthermore, access to a water supply was required to provide the energy needed to operate the mills. The River Camac provided this energy source.

The gunpowder milling operations in the Clondalkin area were operated by several people over the years, including Nicholas Grueber from 1716 to 1733 and the Arabin family in the 1790s. Other notable powder mill owners and manufacturers in the Clondalkin area included William Caldbeck, who had a powder mill operating on the River Camac located close to the present day Mill Shopping Centre in the 1770's, and Richard Chaigneau.

Mill Pond and Mill Ruins at Kilmatead.
From the Photographic Collection of South Dublin County Council Library Services.

The Gunpowder and Other Mills

At the other end of Corkagh Park is an area known as Fairview where the remains of a cornmill and an oil mill can be seen. The corn mill is recorded as being ruinous in 1663. It was a small flour mill which would have been used to grind grain for local consumption. The oil mill is recorded in Griffith's Valuation of the 1850s and was occupied by a Peter McNally and a Joseph Henry Esquire. The complex is described as including a house, offices, yard, oil-mill, pond and small garden. The oil mill produced linseed oil which was extracted from the seed of the flax plant. Oil and corn mills are marked on the Ordnance Plan of the Parish of Clondalkin, 1870, in each case labelled as *'Old'*.

The park known as Clondalkin Park seems to have been once a part of the Corkagh Estate. The new Fonthill Road now separates it from the rest of Corkagh Park. At the northeast end of Clondalkin Park are the ruins of a paper mill alongside two substantial mill ponds. There were also paper mills in nearby Clondalkin village itself and in Saggart.

A receipt from the Clondalkin Oil Mills at Fairview dated 1861.
From the Collection of Mr. Peter Pearson.

Ghost Stories Associated With Corkagh Estate

Arthur Wolfe, Viscount Kilwarden from W.H. Maxwell's History of the Irish Rebellion; with Memoirs of the Union and Emmetts Insurrection in 1803.

The Coach and Horses

Near to Corkagh House was Newlands House. This was at one time occupied by Arthur Wolfe (1739-1803), 1st Viscount Kilwarden or Lord Kilwarden as he was better known, the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. He was a good neighbour of the Finlay family of Corkagh.

During Robert Emmet's Rising of 1803, Colonel John Finlay hearing of a planned attempt on the life of Lord Kilwarden sent for him and pleaded with him not to travel into Dublin City.

Lord Kilwarden decided not to listen to this advice and proceeded as intended accompanied by his daughter, Elizabeth Wolfe and his nephew Reverend Richard Straubenzie Wolfe, a Church of Ireland clergyman. They left the Corkagh Estate by the back entrance near to the present day St. John's Road. and headed off towards Dublin City for Dublin Castle.

Near Thomas Street, their carriage was ambushed by a number of insurgents and both Lord Kilwarden and his nephew were dragged from their coach and were repeatedly stabbed with pikes.

The Reverend Wolfe died immediately from his wounds but his uncle was still alive when soldiers arrived on the scene. He was brought to a nearby building but died an hour later. Amazingly, Lord Kilwarden's dying words were of concern for his murderers *'that no man might suffer but by the laws of his country'*. His daughter, Elizabeth managed to escape unhurt and helped to raise the alarm about what had happened.

After the insurgents ambushed Lord Kilwarden's coach, his terrified horses galloped back the way they had come and entered Corkagh Estate through the back entrance and out the front drive to Newlands House. Over the years, members of the Finlay family claim to have heard the sounds of a coach and horses rushing through Corkagh Estate but neither coach nor horses could ever be seen.

Ghost Stories Associated With Corkagh Estate

The murder of Lord Kilwarden from W.H. Maxwell's History of the Irish Rebellion; with Memoirs of the Union and Emmetts Insurrection in 1803.

The Phantom Band

During the Easter Rising of 1916, Major Gerald Colley, a brother-in-law of Mrs. Edith (*née* Finlay) Colley of Corkagh, was stationed in Dublin Castle and his wife lived in Corkagh. On the day before Easter, the Major telephoned his wife to tell her that there was trouble brewing between Irish nationalists and the British authorities.

On Easter Monday, the rising took place and the Major's wife, along with a friend, went to Belgard Castle to watch the burning buildings in the city of Dublin. Meanwhile, Mrs. Edith Colley, whilst walking with her husband, George P. A. Colley, through Corkagh estate, heard a marching band playing and the sound of tramping feet marching down the Naas Road and through the rear gate of Corkagh.

They hurried back to the house to find the entire staff anxiously gathered at the front of the house. All had heard the band and they thought that Corkagh was going to be attacked. However, the music suddenly stopped and there was nothing to be seen. Despite the large number of people who heard the band no-one saw it.

The People of Corkagh

FROM the Civil Survey dated 1654-1656 a Ralph Mills is recorded for the Corkagh area. In 1660, a Mr. William Trundell is recorded as living at Corkagh House.

On a map dated 1703 it is shown that part of Corkagh was owned by a Stephen Browne, gent. This consisted of 18 parcels of land amounting to 164 acres, 3 roods and 8 perches. In May, 1703, a Lewis Chaigneau, a French settler and merchant who resided in Dublin, is recorded as acquiring 92 acres of Corkagh which had previously been forfeited. In July of the same year he is recorded as acquiring a further 12 acres of Corkagh which had been forfeited by a Peter Nottingham.

In 1716, Mr. Thomas Finlay is recorded as renting Corkagh House. He eventually purchased it in 1750 at an auction in Dick's Coffee House, Skinner's Row, Dublin. From then on until 1959, over 243 years in total, the descendants of Thomas Finlay resided in Corkagh House and gradually acquired the lands which made up Corkagh Estate.

From 1725 to 1845 references are made to the Chaigneaus and Finlays as parties to twenty leases and conveyances of lands in the Corkagh, Kilmatead and Rathcoole areas.

At times, it seems that Corkagh House was rented out and that the Finlay-Colley family lived in other buildings located on the demense, notably the Dower House at Kilmatead. According to Mrs. Valerie Hone (*née* Colley), in times of financial hardship Kilmatead House was sold, then re-purchased when the situation improved again. Corkagh House itself was never sold between 1750 and 1959.

However, a listing of ownership and occupancy in Illustrated Incumbered Estates (Lyons, 1993) mentions that in 1853 there is a record of the house and estate lands being sold by Mr. John Ladaveze Arabin to Mr. Philip Gierson. The descriptive

Ruins of a gunpowder mill at Kilmatead.
From the Photographic Collection of South Dublin County Council Library Services.

The People of Corkagh

The Cedar Lawn, site of many a pleasant tea party in former days.
(Courtesy of Ms. Jennifer Wann)

particulars from the rental states that *'on the Townland of Corkagh is a large Dwelling-house'*. As explained earlier, the townland of Corkagh is where Kilmatead House is located, whereas Corkagh House itself is situated in the townland of Corkagh Demesne.

The occupancy after 1855 is listed as follows:

1855 - 1869 . . . . . Mr. Philip Grierson, in fee.
1869 - 1880 . . . . . The Reverend John W. Finlay, in fee.
1880 - 1889 . . . . . Mr. Henry F. (T.) Finlay, in fee.
1889 - 1907 . . . . . Mr. Philip Grierson, in fee.
1907 - 1939 . . . . . Colonel Henry F. (T.) Finlay, in fee.

1939 Bought by Ms. Edith Colley, under the terms of the Wyndham Land Act Purchase Scheme. (Mrs. Valerie Hone corrects this to: Mrs. Edith Colley inherited Corkagh from her father, Colonel Henry Thomas Finlay in 1936).

1940 - 1960 . . . . . Ms. Edith Colley, in fee.
(Mr. Finlay Colley corrects this to: 1954 - 1959: Mr. Dudley Colley.)

1960 . . . . . Captain Cyril Harty, in fee.
1961. . . . . Tramore (Treemare) Stud Company, in fee.

It appears as if there may be some confusion between Corkagh House proper and Little Corkagh, more commonly known as Kilmatead House.

The Finlay Family

The Finlay name is thought to be derived from Fionn Laoch meaning *fair warrior* and there is a story that the family are descendents of Fionn Mac Cumhaill who crossed to Scotland from Ireland to start the family.

Alexander Finlay is recorded as moving to Ireland from Scotland in 1568, settling in Killashandra, County Cavan. He fought for Queen Mary at the battle of Langside. He was an ancestor of Thomas, the first Finlay at Corkagh.

Thomas Finlay (1710-1776) of Corkagh married Deborah, daughter of Lawrence Steele of Rathbride (Kilbride), County Kildare in 1735. He established a bank in Dublin city. He died in 1776.

Thomas Finlay's bank is listed in various almanacs for Dublin city of the eighteenth century. In 1754 the bank is listed as Thomas Finlay & Co. of Jervis Quay (now Ormond Quay). From 1767, when Thomas' son Colonel John Finlay took over, it remained at 12 Upper Ormond Quay, until 1804 when it moved to 21 Jervis Street. According to one source it was wound up in 1829. It was one of the notable old Dublin banks and at one time was the great commercial bank of the city.

Members of the Finlay family were involved with local volunteer corps or militia down through the years. The militia came into existence in Ireland in 1715, when His Majesty and the Chief Governor were empowered to issue to protestant gentlemen commissions of lieutenancy and array for counties and cities. In return, these gentlemen were empowered to arm and train all protestants between the ages of 16 and 60 in case of insurrection, rebellion or invasion to serve in any part of the kingdom.

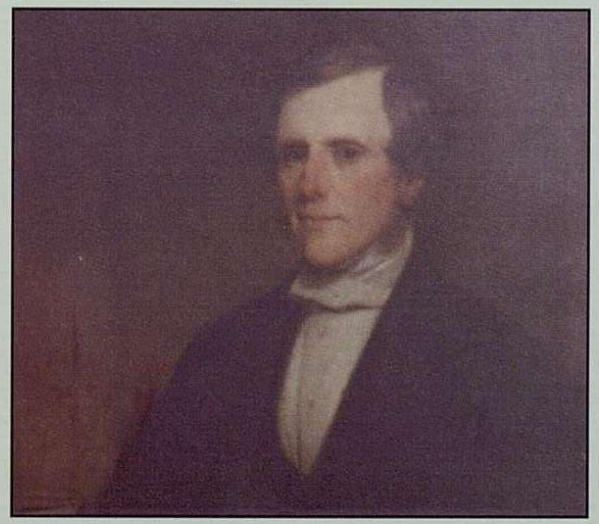
The first Finlay at Corkagh,Thomas and his wife Deborah.
(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley)

The People of Corkagh

Colonel John Finlay was active in politics and represented the County of Dublin in parliament during the eighteenth century. He was a Member of Parliament in the Irish House of Commons for Kilmallock during 1776 - 1783, and for the County of Dublin during 1790 - 1797. He was also a leader of the Uppercross Fusiliers. He is believed to have sought extra government aid at that time for the protection of the rebuilt powder mills. Later he was a Lieutenant Colonel of the Dublin Militia and was involved in rounding up rebels in the Clondalkin area during the 1798 Rebellion. He married Elizabeth Stear, an heiress of County Bedford, England. She died on 8th January 1788, aged 32 years. John himself died on 24th January 1823, aged 73 years.

Colonel John Finlay's son, Thomas Finlay, was a Lieutenant Colonel in the County Dublin Light Infantry. He married Ursula, daughter of John Cromie of Cromore, Portstewart, in 1804. He was also involved in the family banking business in Dublin city. When he died in 1837, his son, Reverend John William Finlay, BA, MA, inherited Corkagh.

Reverend John William Finlay.
(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley)



Born in 1805 in Derry, Reverend Finlay later married Henrietta Isabella, the daughter of Major Henry Cole of Twickenham, in 1837. Henrietta died young, at the age of 31 in 1847, leaving five children. In 1849 he married Caroline Elizabeth Hamilton. Reverend Finlay was a Perpetual Curate at Derryheen (Kilmore) 1834-8, Curate at Castlemacadam 1838-1841 and Perpetual Curate for Rathfarnham 1842-1843. He died in 1879 and is buried in St. John's Church, Clondalkin with other members of the Finlay family.

The Reverend's son, Henry Thomas Finlay, DL, was born on the 15th February 1847. He was a Lieutenant Colonel commanding the 5th Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, having previously served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was also a Justice of the Peace. He married Helen Lucy, daughter of the Reverend Robert Hedges Dunne on 4th December 1877. He died in 1936.

The People of Corkagh

Thomas and Helen Lucy had two daughters and three sons: Edith Maud Olivia (1881-1975); Alice Caroline; Francis Henry John (1879-1900); George Guy (1889-1916) and Robert Alexander (1893-1915). The three sons followed family tradition by joining the army. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the Great War (World War I) many of the militia in Ireland were assimilated into a number of Irish Regiments serving within the British Army.

Sadly, the military careers of the three Finlay brothers were cut short as they were all killed in action. Francis was a 2nd Lieutenant in the 1st Leinster Regiment of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He died on service at Vrede during the South African Wars at the age of twenty-one.

George was a Lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion and then the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment. He died in World War I at the Somme in France on Sunday, 14th July 1916, aged 26. He is commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial at the Somme, France.

Colonel Henry Thomas Finlay and his wife Helen Lucy.
(Courtesy of Mrs. Valerie Hone)

Robert was a Lieutenant in the 5th Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers and then in the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles. He died on Sunday, 9th May 1915, aged 22, somewhere in the region of the French-Belgian border. He is commemorated at the Ploegsteert Memorial, Comines-Warneton, Hainaut in Belgium.

With the deaths of the three Finlay brothers, Henry and Helen Finlay's eldest daughter, Edith Maud Olivia Finlay, became the heir to the Corkagh Estate. Edith, or *Edie* as she was known, eventually married George Pomeroy Arthur Colley, bringing a new family name to Corkagh.

A Simplified Version of the Finlay-Colley Family Tree

Thomas Finlay of Corkagh
b. 1710, d. 1776
— Deborah Steele
m. 1735

Col. John Finlay
d. 1823
— Elizabeth Stear
d. 1788

Lt. Col. Thomas Finlay
d. 1837
— Ursula Cromie
m. 1804, d. 1868

Rev. John William Finlay
b. 1805, d. 1879
— Henrietta Isabella Cole
m. 1837, d. 1847

Col. Henry Thomas Finlay
b. 1847, d. 1936
— Helen Lucy Dunne
m. 1877, d. 1902

- Francis Henry John
  b. 1879, d. 1900
- George Guy
  b. 1889, d. 1916
- Robert Alexander
  b. 1893, d. 1915
- Alice Caroline
- **Edith Maud Olivia**
  b. 1881, m. 1909, d. 1975
  — **George Pomeroy Arthur Colley**
  b. 1866, d. 1933
  - Nora Helen (Noreen)
    b. 1910, m. 1940, d. 1997
  - Veronica Maud
  - Valerie Edith
  - Rosemary
  - Henry John (Jock)
    b. 1918, m. 1943, d. 1944
  - George Dudley Pomeroy
    b. 1911, m. 1947, d. 1959
    — Ann Patricia Burns
    - Finlay FitzGeorge
    - Anthony (Tony) William Pomeroy
      — Mary Kelly
      - Dudley Hugh
      - Jeffrey Andrew
      - Amy Alexandra

Legend:
b. = born
m. = married
d. = died
All dates not known
Not all family members shown

Henry FitzGeorge Colley
b. 1827, d.1886

- Elizabeth Isabella Wingfield
  m. 1858, d. 1903
- Major Gerald Henry Colley
  b. 1870, m. 1906, d. 1923
- Rev. William Wingfield Colley
  b. 1868, m. 1915, d. 1947
- Edward Colley
  b. 1875, d. 1912
- Frances Maud Caroline Colley
  d. 1949
- Dr. Constance Helena Colley
  d. 1912
- Laura Emily Colley
  b. 1867, d. 1942
- Elizabeth (Bessie) Maria Colley
  m. 1883, d. 1895
- Gertrude Theodosia Colley
  m. 1895, d. 1934
- Florence Isabella Pomeroy Colley
  m. 1890, d. 1912
  — Henry Cole Bowen
  b. 1862, d. 1930
  - **Elizabeth Dorothea Cole Bowen**
    b.1899, m. 1923, d. 1973

The Colley Family

The Colleys were a distinguished family who arrived in Ireland during the sixteenth century. The name Colley is derived from *Cu-Uladh an t-Sioda*, meaning *the Ulster Silken Warrior*.

Captain Henry Colley was an officer in the service of the crown under the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. He was eventually granted lands in Carbery, or *Castelcarbre* in County Kildare. The family name was originally spelt Cowley, then Cooley and finally Colley. Captain Colley was also granted the Manor of Edenderry, also called Coolestown or Colleystown, after which the Barony of Coolestown is named. He was knighted in 1576 by the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sydney.

Generations later, the Colley family married into the Pomeroys, the Viscounts Harberton. George Francis Pomeroy (1797-1879) assumed the name Colley. The Colleys moved to Dublin and in the nineteenth century and are recorded as living in Lucan and at Mount Temple in Clontarf. Today it forms part of Mount Temple Comprehensive school. When Mount Temple was sold some members of the Colley family went to live in England.

George Pomeroy Arthur Colley (1866-1933) was one of ten children. His father, Henry FitzGeorge Colley (1827-1886) was a magistrate and landlord and his mother was Elizabeth Isabella Wingfield, daughter of the Reverend Hon. William Wingfield of Powerscourt family fame.

George's ancestor Richard changed his name to Wesley (Wellesley) and Richard's grandson was the 1st Duke of Wellington, he of the Battle of Waterloo fame. George's uncle was Major-General Sir George Pomeroy-Colley, a soldier who rose to great prominence in the British Army, eventually becoming Secretary to the Viceroy of India in 1876 and Major-General and Governor of Natal in 1880. He was tragically killed in 1881 by the Boers at Laing's Lek.

George Pomeroy Arthur Colley and Edith Maud Oliva Finlay.
(Courtesy of Mrs. Valerie Hone)

Dudley Colley at the wheel, date unknown.

Dudley Colley being congratulated by his entrant, Jim Gates, looked on by his mechanic Mick Burke, having just won the Irish Motor Racing Derby in County Cork, 1938. *(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley)*

George's brother Edward also was tragically drowned on the RMS Titanic in 1912. Edward corresponded frequently with George's wife Edith. His sister Florence was the mother of the writer Elizabeth Bowen.

George P. A. Colley married Edith *Edie* Maud Olivia Finlay in 1909. Even though he was deaf from contracting measles at the age of two he learned to lip read and studied engineering. His engineering knowledge was useful in his hobby, motoring. He was actively involved in the Royal Irish Automobile Club's trial events until his death in 1933. He won the 1905 hill climb at Glendu on his 10 horsepower Argyll and toured both Ireland and the continent. He assisted the club's ambulance service during the 1915-19 service. His wife and his father were also automobilists as was his son Dudley.

George and Edith had six children: Nora Helen (*Noreen*); George *Dudley* Pomeroy; Veronica Maud; Valerie Edith; Rosemary and Henry John (*Jock*).

In 1947 Valerie Colley married Captain William Patrick Hone, a cousin of the world renowned stained glass artist Evie Sydney Hone (1894-1955), who in turn was a relative of Edith Maud Olivia Finlay.

Dudley Colley — The Early Motor Racing Connection

George Dudley Pomeroy Colley (1911-1959) was a keen motor racing enthusiast. In 1951, he wrote a book about his motoring experiences entitled *Wheel Patter*. Both Dudley's father and grandfather had also been motoring enthusiasts and Dudley describes his environs as follows:

'I was thus born into an atmosphere of motoring. The walls of this old country house, instead of being adorned with the usual hunting scenes and trophies of the chase, have rows of early photographs of high, stilted cars, bowler-hatted and bewhiskered drivers, and ladies of the family in enormous dust veils. The lumber lofts still hold ancient steel-studded leather-bound tyres. Even the tractor driver on the farm still refers to a spare wheel as a Stepney'.

Dudley Colley studied engineering at Trinity College, Dublin, as his father had done before him. He was involved in various motoring pranks while a student, including driving across the Ha'penny Bridge in his Baby Austin. He was the Honorary Treasurer of the Dublin University Motor-cycle and Light Car Club which organised trials around the country. He himself participated in both motor car and motorcycle racing at this time. Dudley's brother Henry *Jock* Colley (1918-1944) was also a keen motorcycle racer and an inventive engineer. Sadly his life was cut short as a result of an accident while learning to fly with the Royal Air Force in South Africa during World War II. He is commemorated on a plaque in St. John's Church, Clondalkin, dedicated to those who lost their lives during the World War II.

When Dudley was in his third year in engineering his father died, leaving his mother with a 300-acre farm *'mortgaged to the barn roofs'*, and suffering from under-stocking and under-attention. Dudley decided to try his hand at farming rather than pursue a career in engineering. His training and his experience with engines were useful in carrying out structural repairs around the farm and in fixing farm vehicles. His skills were also put to good use in setting up a mini hydro-electric scheme which provided electricity for Corkagh House. This involved replacing a water wheel with a water-powered turbine and is still there to this day.

The Corkagh Dairy vans off to make their deliveries, date unknown.
(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley.)

However, he did not abandon his racing interests. He bought a Frazer Nash from Ainsley Verschoyle and this was his main racing vehicle for the next fifteen years. In 1937 a distant cousin, Phyllis Godfrey, helped him enter the Phoenix Park Grand Prix which took place on 11th September that year. Despite engine problems Dudley came in a respectable eighth position and received a little silver plaque from the Irish Motor Racing Club as a reminder of his first major race.

In 1938 the Leinster Motor Club organised a veteran car competition and Dudley took part along with some friends in a 1911 Renault and a 1911 Model T Ford. In the same year the Irish Motor Derby, an international 1500 cc race, was held in County Cork. Run in parallel was a handicap race for less powerful cars and Dudley won in his Frazer Nash.

He relates how his mother and sister were knitting as they sat listening to the race on the radio and were so intent on the race that his sister knit a sock two feet long!

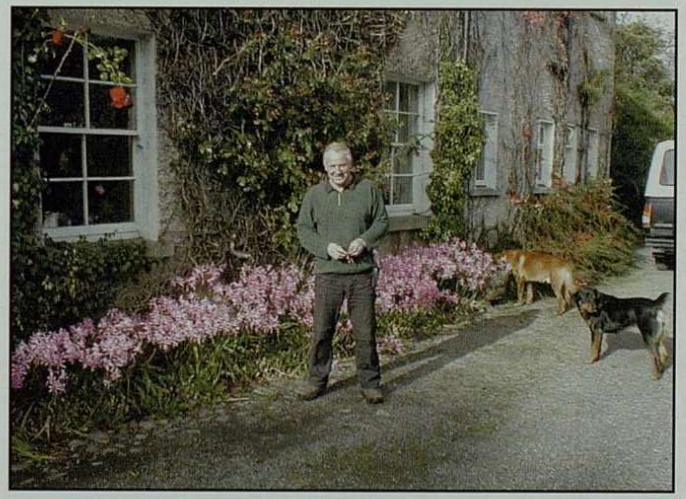
During World War II all motor vehicle use was restricted because of fuel rationing. Dudley took up horse riding and hunting. He also helped set up the Local Defence Force.

After the war Dudley resumed motor racing. In 1946, his by now 20-year-old Frazer Nash helped him to win several races around Ireland. By the end of the year he had accumulated enough points to become Champion Race Driver of the Year and was the first winner of the Walter Sexton Memorial Trophy.

Dudley Colley's racing circuit at Corkagh was located where the Famine Commemorative Arboretum is now situated. It was also used for midget car racing, a sport which Dudley was the first to bring to Ireland.

When Dudley was not involved with motor racing activites, he was managing the estate farm. He built up a dairy herd and established the Corkagh Dairies. True to his engineering interest, he set up the dairies as one of the first mechanised bottling plants in Ireland. Milk was delivered to the surrounding Clondalkin area, promoted by *'Connie the Corkagh Cow!'*

Finlay Colley, a son of Dudley Colley, at Kilmatead, 2001.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)



Like many an estate in Ireland, managing Corkagh was a costly exercise. The Estate was particularly hard hit by an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease in the late 1940's.

In 1947 Dudley married Ann Patricia Burns, daughter of William Burns of Kingswood, Clondalkin. They had two children: Finlay FitzGeorge and Anthony William Pomeroy.

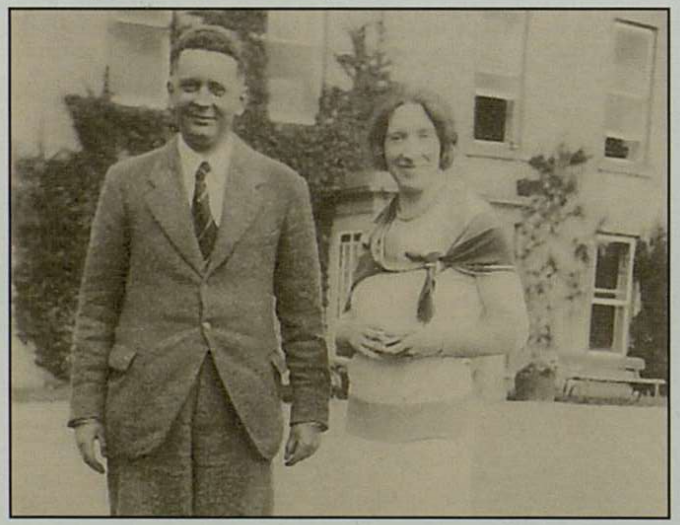
When Dudley Colley died in 1959 the Estate, excluding Kilmatead and its immediate environs, was put up for auction. The Colley family moved into the Mill House at Kilmatead where the Hone family had already been living since 1947.

The People of Corkagh Estate

Corkagh Estate over the years gave much employment to local people in and around the Clondalkin area. The family looked after their staff well and this continued right up to the time that the estate was sold. People alive today, whose parents or relatives worked there have many memories and stories of the Estate and of the Finlay and Colley families.

Mrs. Valerie Hone remembers how in the 1920's when the paper mills closed, her mother Edith started a soup kitchen, and with some people named Hamilton set up a rug-making industry for the local women.

Elizabeth Bowen and her husband Alan Cameron outside Corkagh House, *circa.* 1920s
(Courtesy of Mrs. Valerie Hone)



Elizabeth Bowen - a Literary Connection

Elizabeth *Bitha* Dorothea Cole Bowen (1899-1973) was born in Dublin on 7th June 1899 at Number 15 Herbert Place. Her mother was Florence Colley, a sister of George Colley of Corkagh, and her father was Henry Cole Bowen. She was an only child.

As a child, Elizabeth spent her summers at Bowen's Court, her ancestral home at Kildorrery, County Cork. Her ancestor, Colonel Harry Bowen came to Ireland with Cromwell and his army in the middle of the seventeenth century and was given land in the Cork area. In the autumn the family would return to Dublin for the winter period.

When Elizabeth was seven, her father suffered a nervous breakdown. While he was undergoing treatment, she went with her mother to live in England. Her mother died when she was thirteen years of age.

Her Aunt Laura Emily Colley at Harpenden took her into care. She was educated at Harpenden Hall School, Hertfordshire and Downe House School, Kent. In 1918, Elizabeth moved to London.

Throughout her life, Elizabeth was a regular visitor to Corkagh and Kilmatead. Indeed she always enjoyed visiting her *'Colley Cousins'*. She always felt that the atmosphere at Corkagh was *'cheerful, astringent and ultra-Colley'*. Likewise, Dudley Colley her cousin, was a regular visitor to Bowen's Court in County Cork.

The People of Corkagh Estate

Elizabeth Bowen, *circa* .1950s.
(Courtesy of Mr. Finlay Colley)

In 1923 Elizabeth married Alan Charles Cameron, who worked as Assistant Secretary for Education for Northamptonshire and then as Secretary for Education for the City of Oxford. Later he also worked for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). He died in 1952 shortly after retiring from the BBC.

On the death of her father in 1930, Elizabeth inherited Bowen's Court. She eventually sold it in 1959 for financial reasons. However, by the summer of 1960 it had been completely demolished by the new owner. On hearing of its demolition, Elizabeth commented *'It was a clean end.....Bowen's Court never lived to be a ruin'.*

Elizabeth Bowen is considered by many to be one of the most distinguished novelists of the twentieth century. She was renowned for her many written works, including *The Last September (1929), The Death of the Heart, (1938), Bowen's Court (1942), The Shelbourne (1951)* and *The Little Girls (1964)*.

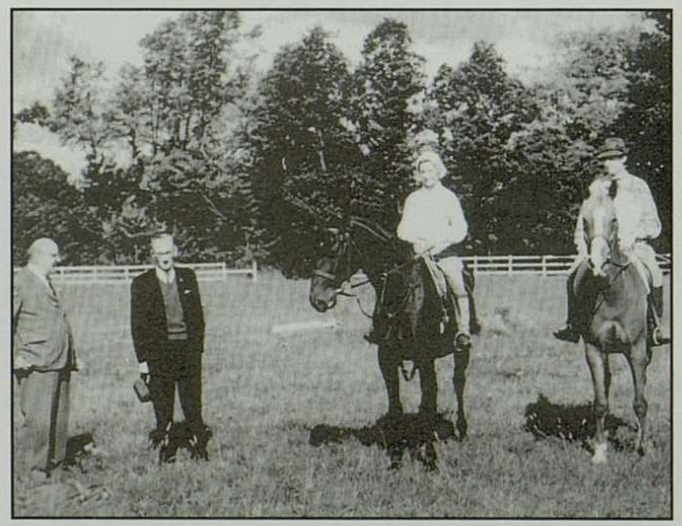
Many honours were bestowed on Elizabeth. The CBE was awarded to her in 1948. She received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters from Trinity College, Dublin in 1949 and from Oxford University in 1956. In 1956 she was appointed Lady Martin Donnelly Fellow at Bryn Mawr College in the United States of America. In 1965, she was made a Companion of Literature by the Royal Society of Literature.

One notable acquaintance was Sir Charles Ritchie (1906-1995), Canadian diplomat, ambassador and eventually high commissioner to the United Kingdom. He visited Elizabeth at both Bowen's Court and Corkagh and remained a close friend all her life. She is mentioned in some of his memoirs.

Another acquaintance of Elizabeth was Sir John Betjeman (1906-1984), the former poet laureate. He lived in Clondalkin for a while and was a frequent visitor to Corkagh.

Elizabeth died in London on 22nd February 1973, after a short illness. Her remains were brought to Ireland and she was buried at Farahy churchyard in County Cork close to her husband, father and the place where once stood her beloved spiritual home, Bowen's Court.

Captain Cyril Harty, Mr. Ambrose Galvin, Mrs. John Galvin and Mr. Eddie Harty at the jumping arena of Treemare Stud, Corkagh House. Photograph taken by Sir John Galvin on the visit of his brother Ambrose Galvin to Ireland, *circa.* 1960s.
(Courtesy of Mr. Eddie Harty)



Sir John Galvin and the Harty Family - The Equestrian Connection

In 1959, The Corkagh Estate was put up for auction and was eventually acquired and managed by Captain Cyril Harty on behalf of Sir John Galvin.

Sir John Galvin was an Australian citizen who made his fortune in the mining industry in various locations around the world. He was something of a philanthropist and is known to have contributed to several good causes, such as hospitals, art and historical collections both in Ireland and abroad.

Sadly, Sir John Galvin demolished the fine old house in the early 1960's. However he did retain the lands for another twenty years, often letting them out for various uses. These included the leasing of the gardens to a market gardener and other parcels of land for tillage. Some of the fine mature trees and hedgerows that existed during that time were cut down to create large tracts of land for arable farming.

Sir John Galvin had a keen interest in rearing prize-winning cattle. In particular he showed Shorthorns and Charolais and won many prizes for them at agricultural shows around Ireland.

Sir John was also a very keen lover of horses and was very interested in equestrian matters. As a result the lands at Corkagh were also used for rearing and training racehorses and show-jumpers. The estate became known as Treemare Stud, named after the many trees on the lands and the mares which were its business.

Captain Cyril Harty was a founder member of the Irish army showjumping team in 1926 and a member of the first Irish team to win the Aga Khan Cup in 1928. Treemare Stud included one of the first riding schools in the country.

Captain Harty's son Eddie rode and trained the horses from Treemare Stud, including Harlequin for the Rome Olympics in 1960. He also won the Grand National on Highland Wedding in 1969. His other son John rode San Michelle in the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Mr. Eddie Harty and Mr. Herbert Harty at the former jumping arena, now the Famine Commemorative Arboretum, in Corkagh Park, 2001.
(Courtesy of Ms. Jennifer Wann)

A third son, Cyril *Buster*, trained and rode San Pedro to win at numerous shows on the west coast of America while he was managing the Rancho San Fernando Rey for the Galvin family. San Pedro holds the record as one of the most successful Nations Cup horses in the history of the sport.

Herbert Harty, a fourth son, was in charge of the young horses at Treemare Stud and travelled with yearlings to the Saratoga sales in the U.S.A.

Stables were constructed in the farmyard and various barn buildings were used for food and equipment storage and as an indoor exercise yard. One part of a barn was converted into extra large stables called loose boxes for *Harlequin*, *San Michelle* and *San Pedro* and these are still almost intact. Also still surviving is the tack room where the saddles and bridles were stored (This tack room was orginally in use for the coach and carriage horses of the estate). The horses were exercised on a circuit reaching right round the house and outbuildings and reaching up the hill towards the Naas Road. What is now the Famine Commemorative Arboretum was used as a jumping arena.

After the Mexico Olympics in 1968 a number of horses were donated to the Irish Army Equitation School by Sir John Galvin. Of the horses donated, *San Carlos* and *San Pedro* were the most successful. San Carlos with Captain Ronnie MacMahon competed at two Olympic Games (Munich in 1972 and Montreal in 1976). San Carlos won the Punchestown three-day event in 1971 and was fourth in the World Championships in Punchestown in 1974. San Pedro represented Ireland in six Nations' Cups and also won the Boylan Cup in the RDS. All horses were returned to Sir John Galvin at the end of their competitive careers in the Irish Army.

In 1983 the then Dublin County Council bought Sir John's portion of the Estate and gradually began to turn it into a public park and recreation area, which was officially opened to the public in 1986.

Corkagh Regional Park - Development of the Concept

THE 1963 Planning Act required local authorities to prepare a Development Plan in which lands would be zoned for various purposes. That exercise by Dublin County Council gave rise to the concept of providing a series of regional parks dotted around the County. A Parks Department headed by Michael Lynch was also established at that time and he was responsible for the acquisition and development of the necessary lands. The lands of Corkagh Demesne were specifically earmarked for a Regional Park for the Clondalkin and Tallaght areas in the 1983 Dublin County Development Plan. It was envisaged that it would serve as a green belt between the new towns of Clondalkin and Tallaght and as a major regional park for both areas.

In 1983, an area of 460 acres of land in the townlands of Kilcarbery, Corkagh and Corkagh Demesne was bought from Sir John Galvin as one lot by Dublin County Council and Dublin Corporation. Approximately 300 acres was developed for recreational and housing usage. The total cost of the purchase was £3.5 million. Other pieces of land that became available have been added to the park over the years. An area of about 130 acres of the original acquisition at Kilcarbery was developed as a public pay-and-play golf course named Grange Castle and opened in 1998.

Following initial development works, the official opening ceremony was performed on the 15th June 1986 by Mr. Ray Burke, T.D, M.C.C., Cathaoirleach, Dublin County Council.

The Playground at Corkagh Park was officially opened by Mr. Paddy Hickey, M.C.C., Cathaoirleach, Dublin County Council on the 30th June 1988.

The newly formed South Dublin County Council have managed the park since 1994.

Trees of the former Corkagh Demense enjoying their maturity in the regional park.
(Picture John McAleer)

Section Two - Environment & Ecology

An aerial view of Corkagh Park

Camac Valley Tourist Caravan and Camping Park

The Environment & Ecology of Corkagh Park

A section of the River Camac flowing through Corkagh Park.
(Picture by Ms. Jennifer Wann)

The River Camac

THE name Camac comes from the Irish *'cam-uisce'*, meaning *'the crooked water'*. The River Camac rises in Ballinascorney in the Dublin Mountains and winds its crooked way via the Brittas Ponds through Saggart where it is called the *'Slade'* before reaching Corkagh Park. After leaving the park, it flows through Clondalkin, Drimnagh, Inchicore and Kilmainham before joining the Liffey at Heuston Station a distance of (25.6 miles) of which over 10 kilometres (6.4 miles) is culverted. The Camac is Dublin's fourth largest river and was important for the powering of many mills along its course from monastic times to the nineteenth century. Its catchment area is 6,637 hectares (16,400 acres) and as with many rivers, there have been periods of flooding; the risk is calculated at once in every 28 years.

The most recent flooding incident was in June 1993 when the river overflowed its banks at the south eastern section of the park causing damage to houses in the Cherrywood estate. Since then, the Council has provided mounded areas around the boundary of the park to contain the flood waters and placed additional culverts under the Newlands/Fonthill Road to allow excess water to escape. Those first phase measures were followed by further flood attenuation schemes further upstream that are ongoing as this publication is going to print. Sections of parkland were lowered by the removal of almost 60,000 cubic metres of soil and the formation of marshland/wetland. The resulting lowered areas will serve as a holding area to retain flood waters and allow them to be slowly released back into the river as the flood subsides. They will also provide an additional habitat with water loving plants thereby attracting new species of birds and other forms of wildlife. The soil being removed in the operation is being placed near the centre of the park to provide a raised area. This will contrast with the relatively flat landscape of the park, allow an opportunity to develop a viewing point and provide a visual link with the Dublin Mountains in the distance.

The Environment & Ecology of Corkagh Park

Flora and Fauna

Corkagh Regional Park contains a variety of different habitats created by the range of different landscapes in the park. These include river and woodland walks, mature hedgerows and fishing lakes. A comprehensive inventory of the flora and fauna of habitats in Corkagh Park and five other parks was undertaken from August to October 1999. A total of over 390 different species were recorded in the park and the following is the number of plant and fungi species recorded for each of the 5 habitat types surveyed, Waterside, 105; Hedgerow, 96; Woodland, 88; Wasteland, 65, Grassland, 53. Two particularly interesting features of the park, the Walled Garden and the Millpond had 61 and 29 species respectively.

Along the River Camac the hedges and banks contain a large proportion of the diversity of species found in the park. The river also encompasses some of the features that predate the establishment of the park such as the Old Mill Pond. Grassland in the park has two different management regimes whereby some areas are designated for nature conservation and others for recreational sports. The area in the west of the park is only cut once a year to develop as a wild flower meadow and help conserve biodiversity whereas the remaining areas of grassland are managed as amenity areas. The Common Frog (Rana temporaria) and the Pipistrelle Bat (Pipistrellus pipistrellus), both found in Corkagh Park, are protected under the Republic of Ireland's 1976 Wildlife Act. The construction of new lakes increases the area of habitat for the Common Frog. The old walled garden is a secure roosting site for the Pipistrelle Bat. Some of the older trees provide nesting sites for kestrels.

Daffodils in springtime in Corkagh Park.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

The Environment & Ecology of Corkagh Park

Deciduous woodland of 15-20 year old trees in Corkagh Park.

Trees and Woodlands

The original landscape of Corkagh Regional Park, prior to its development and opening in 1986, consisted of large open expanses of rolling grassland punctuated by pockets of mature woodland, stands of mature specimen trees and mature hawthorn hedgerows, dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These have been retained as important ecological and landscape features. Original specimen trees include Fraxinus (ash), Quercus (oak), Tilia (lime), Juglans (walnut), Cedrus (cedar), Fagus (beech), Aesculus (Chestnut) and Sequoiadendron.

The majority of the woodland in Corkagh Park is mixed deciduous planting of approximately 20,000 trees planted during the late 1980s and early 1990s since the County Council assumed management of the area. The species composition of these plantations is designed to produce a rich and diverse woodland and parkland landscape. They comprise randomly grouped and intimate mixtures of predominantly broadleaf species including oak, beech, ash, birch, horse chestnut, alder and sweet chestnut. High levels of tree mortality from vandalism were avoided in the early stages of new and developing woodlands due to group planting with high stocking densities. This approach has proved effective in limiting the challenge value offered to persons inclined towards vandalism.

The new woodland planting has provided much needed cover for wildlife; it is making a significant visual impact and providing an effective backdrop to the features of the park. The trees add a gracious maturity and enhance the many lovely walks in the park.

Community involvement is essential in the continuous development and appreciation of Corkagh Park. This is achieved by way of consultation or participation with the aim of generating a greater awareness and a sense of community ownership and responsibility for the trees and woodland areas. Since the mid 1980s, project partners in furthering

The Environment & Ecology of Corkagh Park

the development of the woodlands through a variety of tree planting initiatives have included The Tree Council of Ireland, Clondalkin Unit of Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland, Dublin City and County Planning officials, and over 200 private sponsors of trees in the Famine Commemorative Arboretum.

The involvement of local people in the development and management of Corkagh Park's woodlands and treescape is a particularly significant and successful feature of the park's ongoing development. A number of projects and events have been initiated to stimulate and promote the interest of local people in Corkagh Park's tree cover.

The Clondalkin Unit of the Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland celebrated their 50th anniversary in 1990 with a major tree planting ceremony. The event involved the participation of the boy scouts in planting a new woodland plot comprising over 2000 mixed deciduous trees.

In commemoration of their colleague, Neville Davin, the Dublin City and county planning officials contributed to the re-planting of an avenue of oak trees.

On Sunday March 12, 2000 South Dublin County Council in partnership with Conservation Volunteers Ireland and The National Millennium Committee, hosted a fun tree planting initiative at Corkagh Park to mark the official closure of National Tree Week. The aim of this Millennium Plantathon was to add to the existing woodland in Corkagh Park by planting 5,000 trees against the clock over a five-hour period on the day. Local residents, community groups, school children and anyone with an interest in trees was invited to take part and over 300 people turned up to participate in the tree planting. The 5,000 beech and oak trees were kindly donated by Coillte Teoranta. A site of 0.8 hectares (just over two acres) was selected for planting adjacent to the Camac Valley Tourist Caravan & Camping facility. Special guest for the event was Duncan Stewart of RTE's "Our House" who actively encouraged the volunteers to successfully achieve the ambitious planting target.

The diverse types of trees in Corkagh Park.
(Picture by John McAleer)

An Cathaoirleach, Councillor Cáit Keane planting a tree in the Famine Commemorative Arboretum for the Year of the Volunteer 2001 with staff of South Dublin County Council.

Famine Commemorative Arboretum

A number of projects were initiated for the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of The Famine and one of these was The Famine Commemorative Arboretum in Corkagh Park. It was developed jointly with The Tree Council of Ireland and South Dublin County Council, Parks & Landscape Services Department. The objective was to establish a commemorative tree planting project in the Dublin area and to enable public participation. The arboretum comprises a collection of different trees from all over the world. Being a former demesne which was well planted with trees during the 19th century, Corkagh Park was an appropriate location. Furthermore, the park is alongside the Naas Road, near Newlands Cross, where the Society of Friends (Quakers) had a soup kitchen during the Famine period. While the famine was due to the potato blight, mainly in the west of Ireland, Dublin did not escape, as evidenced by the famine burial plot in Glasnevin Cemetery and a ten fold increase in the issue of pawn tickets during the Famine.

The connection between trees and the Famine is not readily apparent until a number of factors are considered. Ireland had more trees, especially broadleaf species, during the famine period, and so it is appropriate to replace some of the former woodlands of that period. More importantly however, desertification which occurs with the loss of trees, especially in third world countries is directly associated with famines in those countries today.

The Famine was the beginning of widespread emigration from Ireland to Britain and North America, and since then to many other countries. When people emigrated, they travelled across the oceans in wooden ships and when they arrived in the new world, they used trees for shelter and food. For these reasons, The Famine Commemorative Arboretum comprises 150 different types of trees that are native to the countries to where the people emigrated during and since the famine. Many of the trees were brought to Ireland by explorers who accompanied the emigrants.

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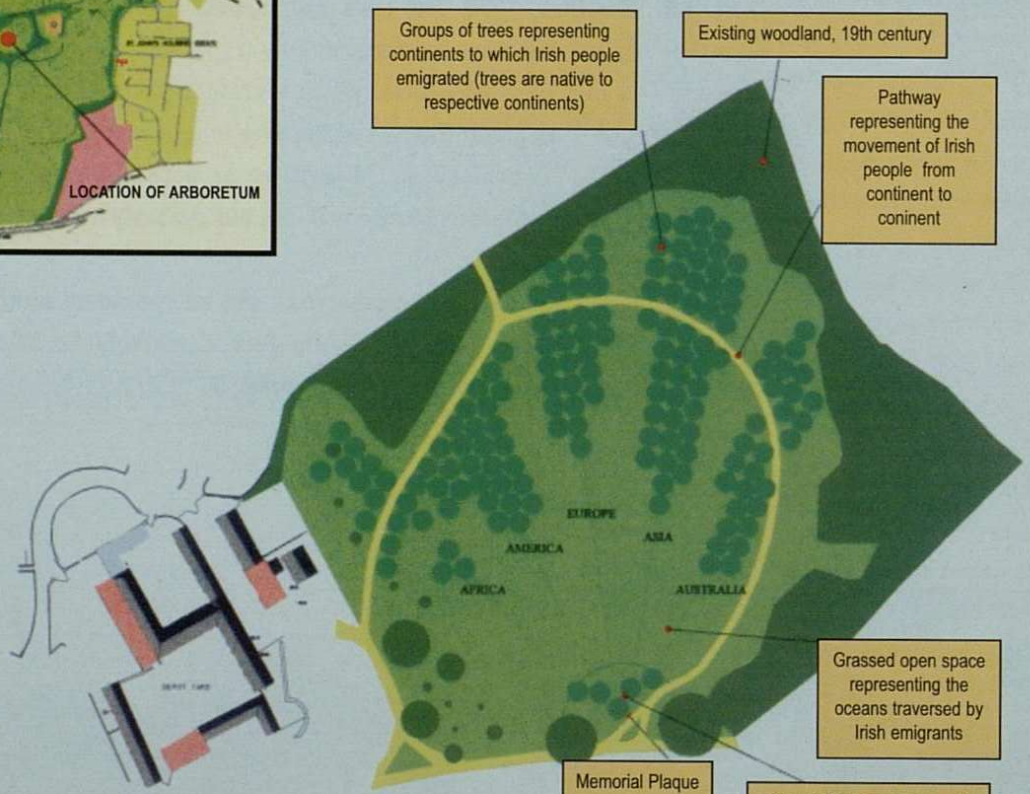
The core of the arboretum is the 150 different species of trees in the centre of Corkagh Park. These are planted in the design of rays of sunshine emanating from a planting of five oak trees; thus symbolising that while the Famine was an event of horrific proportions, it nevertheless resulted in good things for many of the emigrants, and their new countries. The oak trees are Quercus petraea (the sessile oak) which represent Ireland and they are separated by a grassed area (symbolising the ocean) from the five rays of other species which represent the continents. The arboretum is being extended throughout the rest of the park in groups radiating from the core area, adding further to the symbolism. At least ten or more specimens of each species will be planted, making at least 1500 trees in all, but probably more than 2,000.

Each commemorative tree in the arboretum can be sponsored by the public for £35, payable to The Tree Council of Ireland, The Park, Cabinteely, Co. Dublin, for which the sponsor will be issued with a certificate. Over 200 trees have been sponsored to date.

The Famine Commemorative Arboretum.
(Picture by John McAleer)

FAMINE COMMEMORATIVE ARBORETUM
CRANNLANN CUIMHNEACHÁIN AN GHORTA

IN MEMORY OF THE GREAT FAMINE 1845 - 1848



LEGEND:
- NEW TREES
- EXISTING TREES

THE FAMINE COMMEMORATIVE ARBORETUM

The famine was the beginning of widespread emigration from Ireland to Britain and North America and since then to many other countries. For this reason, the Famine Commemorative Arboretum comprises 150 different types of trees (one for each year since the Famine) native to countries to where the people emigrated during and since that time.

The core of the Arboretum is in the centre of the park, where 150 different species of trees are planted in the design of rays of sunshine thus symbolising that while the Famine was an event of horrific proportions, it nevertheless resulted in good things for many of the emigrants, and their new countries. The rays emanate from five specimens of sessile oak (Quercus Petraea), Ireland's national tree, representing Ireland. There are five rays representing the five continents to which Irish people have emigrated, and each is planted with indigenous species symbolising that continent. The space between the continents and the sessile oaks is grass, symbolising the oceans across which everyone had to travel when leaving Ireland. A pathway is constructed through the continents symbolising the movement of Irish people from one continent to another, allowing the public the opportunity to study the different trees, or simply to enjoy a walk in the park.

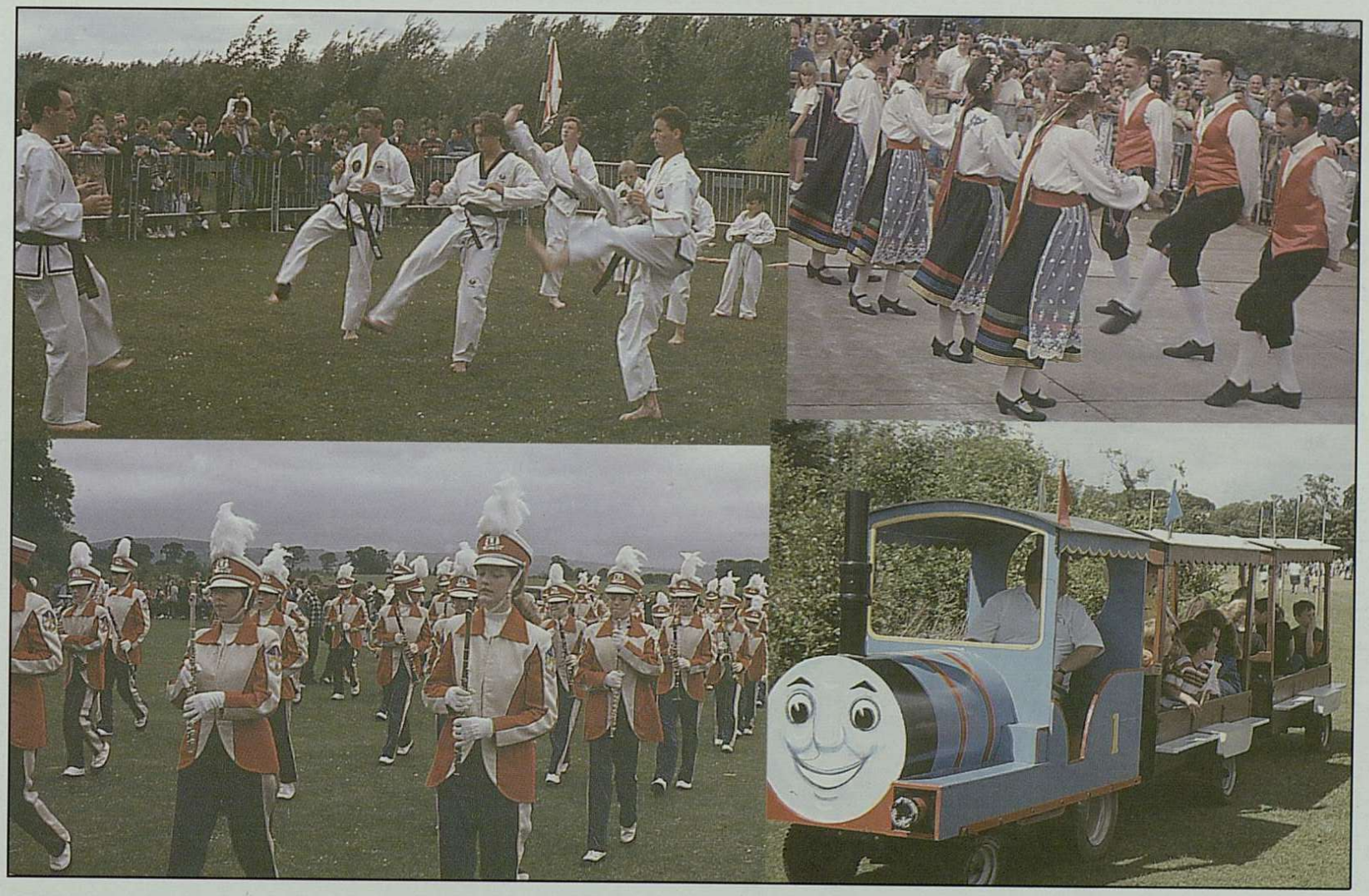
The rest of the Arboretum will be planted over the next two years, and these trees will be in groups throughout the park, radiating from the core area, adding further to the symbolism. At least ten or more specimens of each species will be planted, making at least 1,500 trees in all, but probably more than 2,000.

Each commemorative tree in the Arboretum can be sponsored by the public for £35, payable to the Tree Council of Ireland, for which the sponsor will be issued with a certificate, and their name will be included in a "Roll of Honour" to be retained in the County Library, Tallaght.

Ag Seo Ar gCiraun
Cha We Hold in Great

THE TREE COUNCIL OF IRELAND
COMHAIRLE CRANN NA hÉIREANN

Section Three - Recreation



(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Active & Passive Facilities

CORKAGH Regional Park is a valuable resource and facility for the communities of Clondalkin and the surrounding hinterland. It extends practically to the centre of Clondalkin village, although the section cut off by the Newlands/Fonthill Road is also known as Clondalkin Park. It is intensively used for active sports and includes the Clondalkin Sports and Leisure Centre with a swimming pool, gym, sauna, etc.

The idea for the establishment of the centre was initiated at Muintir na Tíre meetings in the then rural village of Clondalkin in the late fifties. The Clondalkin branch of Muintir na Tíre/Clondalkin Community Council planned and carried out a phased development which included a Swimming Pool, Sports Hall, Football Pitches and Tennis Courts.

When the swimming pool opened in 1973 it was the culmination of a massive community drive to bring about the completion of the first phase of the Community Council's ambitious plans. It brought about the demise of the "swimming hole" in Corkagh Park. Known to all the Clondalkin children of the fifties and sixties as Sandy Hole, it was to be found off a lane going towards the Oil Mills. It is claimed that hundreds of children learned to swim there.

Children enjoying the swimming pool in Clondalkin Sports & Leisure Centre.

Nowadays, thousands learn to swim in the pool at Clondalkin Sports and Leisure Centre. The leisure centre has as its objective "Leisure for All." Its goal is to provide as many different and variable sport and leisure activities as physically possible and practicable.

The swimming pool provides the perfect example of this wide range. As well as public swimming, there are swimming lessons for all ages, water polo, snorkelling, canoe polo, aqua fit classes and children's party sessions complete with the big inflatable dog. The

Active & Passive Facilities

pool also has a steam room and a sauna. The pool opens at 5.30 a.m. and remains open most weekdays until 10.30 p.m. approximately. Plans are at preparation stage for the construction of a new pool to replace the existing one.

A further development by the Community Council was the opening of the Sports Hall adjacent too but separate from the pool. Towards the latter end of the 1980's the County Council made structural alterations combining both buildings. The centre has a Sports Hall with five badminton courts and caters for a wide variety of sports including Archery, Kick Boxing, Indoor Football, Rock Climbing, Hockey, Carpet Ball and Bowls. There is a fitness studio fully equipped with modern cardio vascular equipment and staffed with qualified staff.

The variety of services and facilities also include a beauty salon, hairdressers, full time creche, Montessori school and Coffee shop. And for those who want to keep up Clondalkin's well established Irish speaking tradition there is a Naoinna (Irish speaking) play group. Extensive canoeing and other outdoor education classes are operated for the centre through the County Dublin Outdoor Education Centre. For those suffering sports injuries or any other conditions needing physiotherapy there is a complete physiotherapy unit with specialised equipment and highly qualified staff.

Midget car racing is held on Family Day in the Park in mid-summer.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Leisure Walking

Leisurely walking is a popular activity, which can provide an opportunity for people to observe wild flora and birds while enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the park environment of woodlands and open spaces. The park is used as an outdoor classroom for groups and youth organisations for natural heritage studies. School groups are frequently facilitated with guided walks throughout the year with particular emphasis on such events to support Tree Day, an annual event in October organised by the Tree Council of Ireland to promote the appreciation of trees in schools.

In the coming months, work will commence on the provision of a major new facility in the park immediately beside the entrance with St. John's estate. The car park will be redesigned into a larger, more convenient and safer area. New buildings will be constructed in front of the car park. These will include a new depot for staff with a yard and machinery storage area at the rear. There will also be a small visitor centre with public toilets from where the Park Rangers will operate and overhead will be caretaker's apartments. The scheme also includes provision for changing room accommodation to facilitate the football clubs utilising the four playing pitches nearby.

In addition to the pedestrian pathway system and seats, there are major water features, picnic areas, a children's playground, football pitches and baseball grounds, viewing points, toilets and car parking. The children's playground constructed for the opening of the park in 1986 is on a large site sheltered by surrounding woodlands. In recent years some of the equipment has been refurbished and this work will continue. A pathway was added to the perimeter of the playground to facilitate disabled access.

Families enjoying a stroll in Corkagh Park.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Active & Passive Facilities

As an attraction to all age groups, the park provides opportunities for a wide range of outdoor active and passive recreational activities. Such activities include walking, jogging and participation in active sports. The playing pitches are located in the northern and eastern section of the park where the gradient of the land is generally more suitable. Soccer, Gaelic football and hurling are the dominant uses but alongside them are Ireland's only purpose built Baseball Fields. Officially opened on the 4th July 1998 by the American Ambassador, Jean Kennedy Smith who threw the ceremonial first pitch, they include a regulation youth Little League and a standard adult field capable of holding international events and tournaments. Irish American Peter O'Malley, the then chairman of the Los Angeles Dodgers, a famous US baseball team, funded the project. The fields are used by the Irish Baseball & Softball Association founded in 1989.

Baseball, Gaelic and Soccer are some of the sports activities that take place in Corkagh Park.

Levels of Public Usage

ALL parks have a peak usage on weekends and Corkagh Park is no exception. However, it is surprising the number of people who regularly use the park on a daily basis, especially to walk their dogs.

Students of the Institute of Technology, Tallaght, carried out the first parks visitor survey in the spring and summer of 1999. It revealed a high level of satisfaction with the park, particularly in regard to parking, safety, accessibility and its range of facilities; 99.2% expressing confidence in recommending the park to others. A majority appreciated the wildlife diversity in the park and over 27% were unaware of the history of the land before it was developed as a park. Over 70% were pleased with the woodlands and over 66% liked the water features. Comments received indicated the need to provide more litter bins, better toilets, more seating and an improvement of signage throughout the park. These views will be taken into consideration in carrying out future improvements.

Because of the many access points to the park, it is difficult to determine the number of visitors and therefore no such statistics are available. However, in July of each year, the Council organises a Family Day by providing a range of activities, mainly for the young to enjoy. Music and dancing takes place alongside face painting, train rides, Celtic Warrior battles and of course Punch & Judy shows. Special events such as parachute jumps are a main attraction and this year a new attraction was midget car racing. The events are well organised and attended by at least 4,000 people.

Some of the parents and children who enjoyed Family Day in Corkagh Park.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Camac Valley Tourist Caravan and Camping Park

DUBLIN'S first municipal tourist caravan and camping park costing IR£1.5 million, opened for business in 1996. It occupies 6 hectares (15 acres) in the south western corner of Corkagh Park, adjacent to the N7 with access to the site by way of the Naas Road Dual Carriageway. It was regarded as an ideal site for this facility, because of its pleasant environment, convenience to the city (approx 20 minutes), and access to the rest of the country.

The project was part of South Dublin County Council's strategy to attract more tourists to the County, and was based on the recognised need for additional camping facilities in Dublin. With the support of Dublin Tourism and Bord Failte, the Parks & Landscape Services Department took the initiative to provide a Tourist Caravan and Camping Park to service both foreign and domestic tourists.

With a population in excess of one million people, Dublin has many attractions for tourists, business people, and those attending various events. However, while there are a great number of hotels, and similar forms of accommodation, there has been great shortage of facilities for those who want to use caravans or tents. Only two tourist caravan and camping grounds existed in Dublin, and they are located approximately 10 miles from the city centre.

The administrative and service buildings at Camac Valley Tourist Caravan and Camping Park.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

Statistics from Bord Failte indicated that 4% of all overseas tourists using caravan and camping grounds, visit Dublin. But while there are plenty of such parks all over the country, Dublin only had 2% of the total. Therefore there was an existing demand which prompted the search for a municipal facility such as exists in many other European cities.

The internal layout includes two principal roads and three minor roads separating the various divisions within the site. The park includes 113 sites, of the dimensions 10m x 15m, each site having a hard stand area for a caravan and car. The rest of the park caters for approximately 50 tents and there is a special area to accommodate touring

Camac Valley Tourist Caravan and Camping Park

A section of the camping area.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

buses; a particular feature of school tours from continental Europe. The caravan pitches are serviced with mains water, sewage and electricity to accommodate the more modern caravans, and there is also a chemical toilet disposal area. Fresh water points and electrical sockets are convenient for the tent locations.

The park has three buildings which were designed by the Council's Architectural Services Department under the direction of Mr. Brian Brennan, County Architect and they include a range of materials including steel, concrete and timber. Designed as pavilions, they enhance the park, and are attractive features within the landscaped setting. The principal building is an administration pavilion located near the entrance, providing a reception, small office, store, shop, TV room and an area where visitors can relax and have tea or coffee. With a floor capacity of 245 square metres, it also includes toilets and showers, with a laundry and a nappy changing room. Its design comprises two linked clerestorey structures of steel supporting a timber frame with external cladding of timber. It has an external boardwalk which is sheltered from the rain by a generous roof overhang.

A timber frame bungalow located near the administration building is designed to harmonise with the administration building. It has 100 square metres floor capacity comprising two apartments; one is a residence for the manager of the park and the other for his supporting staff. The combination of both buildings orientated at right angles to each other conveys a pleasant village atmosphere for visitors. The third building located towards the rear of the site is a more conventional structure with concrete blocks. It has the largest floor capacity (approximately 360 square metres) and includes toilets, showers, and a camper's kitchen. Following its completion the entire facility was officially opened by Councillor Therese Ridge, Cathaoirleach, South Dublin County Council on the 25th June 1997.

Camac Valley Tourist Caravan and Camping Park

A typical caravan bay.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

There is a childrens playground located in the centre of the site comprising over 600 square metres containing a range of attractive play equipment for the younger age groups. The playground is surfaced with bark mulch with impact absorbing rubber tiles placed beneath the swings and major items of equipment.

The site is enclosed with a security fence both sides of which are screened with a native thorn shrub (Prunus spinosa) and beech (Fagus sylvatica) to enhance the security of the fence and reduce its visual impact on the landscape. Night time illumination is low level lighting thus providing a safe, secure environment for the camp site users. The lighting is designed to eliminate any hazard to users of the Naas Road dual carriageway.

The entire site is attractively landscaped with tree and shrub planting throughout to enhance the existing vegetation of the area and to provide an attractive environment for the campsite users. The principal roads are planted with native ash trees (Fraxinus excelsior) forming avenues, and the smaller roads are lined with native birch (Betula alba). Each pitch is defined by low hedges with larger hedges planted in every 6th bay to add variety. The car park and adjacent areas are planted with silver birch trees (Betula alba) and an underplanting of heathers which provide contrast and colour all year round. Rocks are placed at strategic locations to add texture and colour to the landscape. Elsewhere, beds are planted with summer flowering shrubs such as Hydrangea, and a number of herb borders will add aroma as well as being of culinary use, especially for foreign visitors who value highly the use of herbs.

Almost 25,000 visitors stay in Camac Valley each year. They come from 40 countries around the world. Half of all visitors are from the UK and half of those are from Northern Ireland. Visitors from France, Holland and Germany comprise about 10% from each country. Accolades to date include being the outright winner in the Accommodation category of the ESAT Telecom/Dublin Tourism, Tourism Business Awards in 1999. In the same year it was also an outright winner receiving an "Award of Excellence" in the Irish Caravan & Camping Council Parks Award Scheme sponsored by Bord Fáilte.

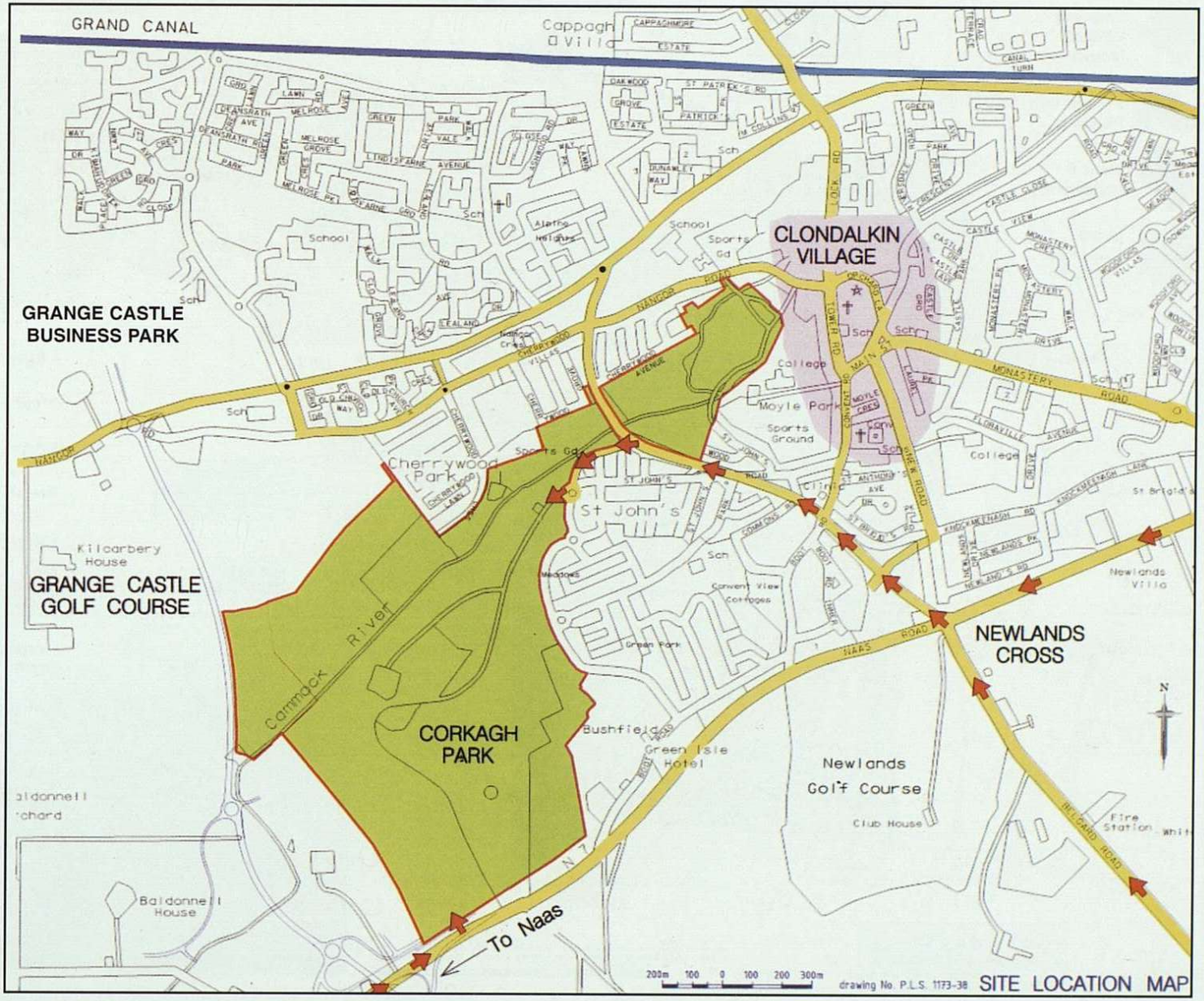
'Put and Take' Fishery

PUT AND TAKE fishery was developed in 2001. With financial support from the Tourism Angling Measure, the project is intended to promote angling in the greater Dublin area as a recreational resource for year round appeal to a wide range of people. The Eastern Regional Fisheries Board and Dublin Tourism see the new facility as part of an integrated urban tourism package for the 100,000 anglers who visit Dublin annually. Angling is the third most popular activity for overseas tourists; it is particularly important for visitors from the UK.

Built alongside the River Camac, it comprises two lakes, which will be stocked with fish, and members of the public will be invited to fish there for a fee. Excavation of over 30,000 cubic metres of soil and rock was required for the larger lake and the smaller lake was made by the removal of 10,000 cubic metres of soil. Boardwalks projecting out into the lakes are provided to increase the available area for fishing. The lakes will be surrounded by a system of pedestrian pathways. The facility is the first of its kind in the Dublin area and is an unique addition to the park. Also, the lakes were designed to retain flood waters and allow a controlled release through penstocks back into the river. They are part of the flood attenuation measures being undertaken and will be of benefit to residents of Clondalkin and the greater Dublin area.

Appendix 1:

Corkagh Park Location Map



Appendix 2:

Corkagh Park — Layout

Appendix 3:

Corkagh Park Statistics

Area of Park:	131.7 hectares	325.4 acres
Boundary Length:	7512 metres	5 miles
Area of Lakes:		
Upper Lake	15720m²	3.88 acres
Lower Lake	10701m²	2.64 acres
No. of Entrances:		
Vehicular	5	
Pedestrian	8	
Length of Footpaths:	10711 metres	7 miles
Length of Hedgerows	15843 metres	10.5 miles
Area of Woodland:	12.9 hectares	3.2 acres
Playing Pitches:	16	
Car Parking Spaces:	323	
Area of Playground:	6526m²	1.6 acres
Length of River Camac through Park	3600 metres	2.4 miles

Wildflowers in Corkagh Park.
(Picture by Dr. Christy Boylan)

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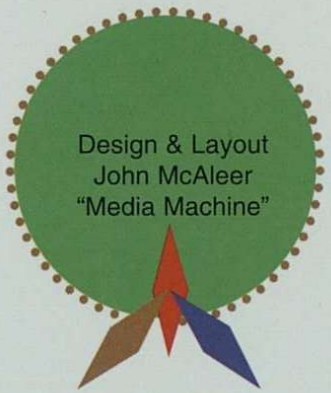
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